UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/607
2 July 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 2 JULY 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to draw your attention to the recent infiltration of a military submarine of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea into the territorial waters of the Republic of Korea.

On 22 June 1998, at 1640 hours local time, a 70-ton, 60-foot Yugo-class military submarine was found about 11.5 miles off the east coast of the Republic of Korea, entangled in a fishing net near the port city of Sokcho. The submarine was found at 38 degrees 12.00 minutes N, 128 degrees 50.78 minutes E, about 23 miles south of the Northern Limit Line.

After the submarine was towed ashore on 25 June, a special investigative team of the Government of the Republic of Korea conducted a thorough examination of the evidence and circumstances surrounding the incident. The bodies of nine North Korean crew members were found dead inside the submarine in an apparent murder-suicide, along with weapons and equipment typically used for infiltration. Investigators have concluded from the evidence collected in the submarine that it belongs to the North Korean Workers' Party and that it was used in committing an act of military infiltration into the Republic of Korea, a clear breach of both the 1953 Armistice Agreement and the 1992 Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-aggression and Exchanges and Cooperation between the South and the North.

In the statement of 29 June 1998, issued by the Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Korea, the Korean Government has urged North Korea to make an understandable explanation, punish those responsible for the incident and renounce all anachronistic acts of military provocation. It has also strongly warned North Korea that should such an act of provocation recur in the future, North Korea would be held totally responsible for the consequences.

The members of the Security Council may recall that a similar incident of infiltration took place on 18 September 1996 and that the President of the Security Council subsequently issued a statement on 15 October 1996 (S/PRST/1996/42) expressing serious concern over that incident. In this connection, the North Korean authorities issued a statement on 29 December 1996

expressing deep regret and providing assurances that such an incident would not recur in the future.

In the light of these facts, the recurrence of this incident is deplorable. The Government of the Republic of Korea finds the incident all the more regrettable because it occurs at a time when the Government of the Republic of Korea has been pursuing a new policy of greater engagement and reconciliation with North Korea through dialogue and exchanges.

For your reference, I wish to enclose herewith copies of documents related to this incident, including excerpts from the said statement by the Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Korea.

I would be grateful if you would have this letter and the attached documents circulated as a Security Council document.

(Signed) LEE See-young
Permanent Representative

Annex I

Excerpts from the statement of the Minister of National Defence on the recent submarine incident, dated 29 June 1998

Thorough investigations by a joint investigation team composed of our military, National Intelligence Service and police found that this incident was an act of infiltration by special agents attached to the operations department of the North Korean Workers' Party.

According to the investigation, the special agents reached the Susan-ri area off the east coast at approximately 2337 on 21 June aboard the Yugo-class submarine, where three out of the nine members on board infiltrated into the coast and carried out assigned missions for about one hour. Upon completion of their mission, the submarine was heading back to the North before it was spotted by a local fisherman some 11.5 miles east of the port city of Sokcho and seized by the navy of the Republic of Korea.

Contrary to North Korean allegations that the submarine was wrecked while on a training mission, this incident is a clear and intentional act of provocation by the North Korean Workers' Party. We cannot suppress our anger over the provocation by the North Korean authorities, which had promised to prevent the recurrence of this kind of provocation two years ago when, in a similar incident, a North Korean submarine was captured in the port city of Kangneung.

We urge North Korea to make an understandable explanation, punish those responsible for this incident and renounce all anachronistic acts of military provocation.

We strongly warn North Korea that, should such an act of provocation recur in the future, North Korea will be held totally responsible for the consequences.

We strongly protested against the violations of our territorial waters and the Armistice Agreement at Panmunjom on 23 June, during the United Nations Command-Korean People's Army General Officers' talks. Based on the results of the investigation, we will immediately demand reconvening of the General Officers' talks and urge North Korea to take appropriate measures regarding the infiltration incident.

Annex II

Report of the Chief of the Central Joint Investigation Team on the investigation of a North Korean submarine seized off the coast of Sokcho

The infiltration of a North Korean submarine into the territorial waters of the Republic of Korea was spotted by Mr. Kim In-yong, captain of the "Dong-il" fishing boat. He reported to the military authorities around 1640 on 22 June 1998 that a North Korean submarine was caught in a fishing net 11.5 miles east of Sokcho.

The 70-ton, 60-foot Yugo-class submarine was subsequently captured and towed to a naval base at Tonghae by our naval and air forces. About 1650 on 25 June it was lifted out of the water and placed on the breakwater. A special investigation team was formed to examine the interior and exterior of the submarine.

The investigation has revealed that the submarine and its crew belong to the Wonsan Liaison Unit, an operational detachment of the North Korean Workers' Party. (This unit is known to specialize in maritime infiltration, sabotage and espionage.)

Based on the log found on the submarine, the investigation team has reconstructed the infiltration route as follows: the North Korean submarine left its home base near Wonsan (North Korea) at 1830 on 20 June and arrived at Susan-ri, Yangyang-gun, Republic of Korea at 1820 the next day. It is believed that at 2337 on 21 June three crew members from the submarine infiltrated into a coastal land area to install a secret unmanned "drop-off" point (so-called "debouch"). It appears that upon completing their mission in about an hour, these three returned to the submarine. The submarine was on its way back to the North when it got entangled in a fishing net on 22 June.

The investigation team has concluded from the evidence collected in the submarine that the total number of the crew members aboard the submarine was nine. Six were regular crew members; the other three were "combat units", that is, special agents.

The investigation team has examined the inside of the submarine. It appears that all nine crew members either committed suicide or were killed by their own colleagues. About 1,000 items were retrieved from the submarine; about 100 of them were types of equipment used for infiltration, including aqualungs, oxygen tanks and flippers; about 600 were weapons such as RPG-7, recoilless anti-tank guns, AK-47 rifles and Czech-made handguns; about 50 items were types of telecommunication equipment, including a TR transmitter; the rest were miscellaneous items such as clothing, food, medicine, etc.

It is obvious from the above evidence that this submarine was used in committing an act of military infiltration into the Republic of Korea, a clear violation of the 1953 Armistice Agreement and the 1992 Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-aggression and Exchanges and Cooperation between the South and the North.